Editors' Introduction

THE QUESTION OF MODERNITY MEETS THE QUESTION OF LEO STRAUSS

The present volume consists of eleven chapters coming from papers prepared by a number of different scholars invited to participate in a conference on the legacy of Leo Strauss. The conference was held at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, on June 4-5, 2009. The title of this book is the same as the title of the conference.

* * *

We are modern people. We find ourselves gathered "in the same boat" moving towards a hopefully better future. Our destination may appear to be a final state, a universal and homogeneous one, where the most important question is found to be resolved. That is the question, "How to live?" It was brought to light and explicated by the philosophers of the Socratic tradition. They bequeathed to us some truth about humanity itself, namely about the man who is participating in a constant struggle to answer the question, "How to live?" However, insofar as the question proves to be "infinite, absolute," it cannot be answered in a definite way. The final state marking its final resolution has in fact never come and is never to come, indeed. But what if we are taught, or learned, undoubtedly to believe that it really exists or just emerges from the course of history? Even granted the Socratic truth, is there still enough space within the domain of humanity for our leading truly different ways of life? Is being a poet, or a prophet, not to mention being a philosopher in a very Socratic sense, something still possible and acquirable for us moderns? Is a political science stemming from the philosophic and poetic consciousness of the most important question still to be exercised?

There have been rather few authors capable of writing on such issues. Certainly one of them is Leo Strauss. But he is also a controversial figure in the eyes of many scholars and readers who often hear of him as a founder of a mysterious sect or an intellectual "godfather of the neoconservative movement." To be sure, what cannot be forgotten is that during his lifetime Strauss was relatively neglect-

ed by his fellow academics or even somewhat derided by them especially because of his manner of reading "esoterically" and his emphatic criticism against the positivist approach in social science. He was also a teacher, and a teacher genuinely loved by his students, of a large group of political scientists who then have tried to continue the detailed research into the history of political philosophy. Their studies of political phenomena have thus turned out completely different from the studies carried out by most of the specialists in their branch of study. In such a context, Strauss's pupils or followers might have felt almost persecuted. All in all, it has become arguable whether Strauss can primarily be perceived as a profound thinker and not as a "founder" or "godfather;" or if one is able to read his texts with a kind of successful patience, but alone, to train one's mind under his books, and finally to grasp some fundamental questions that he was concerned with, without being actually involved in the "Straussian school." And yet, as the intellectual as well as political climate has begun to change, when a heterogeneity of the social sciences has generally been proclaimed and some new striking challenges in the realm of politics and society and culture have been noticed, the thinking of Leo Strauss returns to us not just as an eccentric effort in understanding a deep past but as a lively Socratic struggle to understand life itself.

So in the recent years the question of modernity as raised by Strauss, along with the whole theological-political dimension that should be gained through thinking on the "modern solution" we now seem to experience, aroused much interest in the United States and some, too, in Western Europe. There were many stages of debate with highly differentiated levels of profundity. Very little of it has been, however, recognized and seriously understood in Poland. This book was born out of our intellectual desire that has originated some time ago, during our studies that took place at the Jagiellonian University in the old beautiful city of Krakow. Then we encountered some questions about main tenets and sources of what can be called the modern way of life, and began to seek possible answers in wise books. We may, moreover, have felt ourselves witnesses to a great political and social change: It seemed that in our country the "process of transformation" had been by and large completed as Poland finally joined the European Union in 2004. So it was our personal experience that made us inclined to raise the subject of modernity and put it into the context of the legacy of Leo Strauss.

The title of this volume seems to suggest that modernity is irremediably flawed or devoid of something of utmost importance. But is the answer to the question of what has been lost ready at hand? Someone familiar with the elaborate arguments of the discontents of modernity might react with a feeling of dismay. After all, has not the situation of the modern man been analyzed endless times with the use of such prolific concepts as "disenchantment," "rationalization," "mass culture," "one-dimensionality," "commercialization," etc? But to dismiss this question simply on the basis that it has been raised too frequently would not be intellectually responsible. All the more so since in the case of Strauss's intellectual legacy

the problem of modernity is being posed in such an insightful way that shuns all categories. But in what sense is our intimation of modernity's insufficiency defensible? It seems that we are led toward this problem as soon as we begin to grasp the simple fact of living in the world that has come to be almost unanimous with regard to any relevant concept of best regime. Sixteen years after Strauss's death the liberal-democratic model has been declared victorious and the idea of promoting it worldwide has been put on the top of the agenda. The vital question is, however, whether liberalism really permits many different ways of life to be exercised within it; it may also be true that the prevalent model of society works in such a way that a particular model of culture is being imposed on us, notably in the field of political discourse; the model that excludes from the outset and in the long run even destroys many ways of life which do not conform to it; and that a real tension between human beings disappears insofar as there is only one way of being "correct." It is thus clear that by pointing to the concerns in question we point toward something that goes beyond the discussion about the pros and cons of liberal democracy. It would be presumptuous to believe that the current embrace of the liberal-democratic model of culture has definitely settled the question of how to live.

One of Strauss's great achievements is certainly connected with his steadfast allegiance to that Socratic question. Strauss might have been afraid of modernity's silencing of this question, i.e., that a problem of man's good life would no longer be approached as the problem. And if the Heideggerian narrative develops the thesis that the history of Western metaphysics accounts for the forgetfulness of the question of Being, in Strauss modernity seems to bear responsibility, to some extent, not only for lowering man's goal, but also for doing away with the question, "How to live?" The complete oblivion of this question seems to be an unavoidable consequence of the coming into existence of a universal and homogenous state. Strauss saw this clearly in his famous debate with a renowned French philosopher and one of the European "founding fathers," Alexandre Kojève. For in a universal and homogenous state there would be no place for an inquiring philosophy in the Socratic sense; in such a state the most urgent questions are once and for all abolished by the final wisdom and the wisdom wins absolutely over philosophy. The shadow cast by Kojève's vision of the fulfillment of history certainly informs Strauss's concern with the consequences of modernity. Modernity conceived in terms of radical immanence, complete reconciliation with the world, and oblivion of eternity, seems to provide conditions particularly fit for a thorough oblivion of the Socratic question.

If modernity threatens to silence the most important question, it seems all the more important to show that the contemporary answers fall short of being self-evident. The importance of the so-called theologico-political problem becomes more crucial if viewed from this perspective. By confronting philosophy and the revealed religion, i.e., by juxtaposing the irreconcilable claims of Athens and Je-

rusalem and sharpening their contours, Strauss succeeds in putting into focus the grounds of our action, or in other words, the question, "Who is to be obeyed?" when it comes to leading one's life. However, there is much more to it than that. Strauss not only recalls the most important Western alternative concerning the way of life; the way he does it seems to involve a claim that the very possibility of raising that question depends on the existence of genuinely possible options or alternatives. Were this tension to disappear completely, the question "How to live?" would lose its urgency. In this sense one can say that Strauss's apprehension concerning modernity corresponds somehow to that formulated by Nietzsche. In the Preface to *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche wrote that "the splendid tension in the spirit, something unlike anything existing on earth before" arose as a consequence of "the fight against the thousands of years of pressure from the Christian church." According to him there have been two attempts "in the grand style" to unbound the string and ease the spirit's tension: Jesuitism and the Democratic Enlightenment. He avers that the free spirits, who are neither Jesuits nor Democrats, still have "the need, the entire spiritual need, and the total tension of its bow." Without attempting to write Strauss into the Nietzschean vocabulary or even philosophy, one can justly say that Strauss understands the crucial role played by this tension of the spirit. For if the West owes its vitality to the antagonism between Athens and Jerusalem, philosophy or the philosophic way of life is in need of self-assertion and rational justification in the face of its most serious competitor, namely the life based upon recognizing the supreme authority of the Revelation. While any desire to stay confined within a faith proves fatal to any philosophy, being confronted with faith proves ultimately salutary to philosophy. As Strauss concludes, "No one can be both a philosopher and a theologian, nor, for that matter, some possibility which transcends the conflict between philosophy and theology, or pretends to be a synthesis of both. But every one of us can be and ought to be either one or the other, the philosopher open to the challenge of theology or the theologian open to the challenge of philosophy."

The defense of philosophy may be judged as Strauss's major intellectual task. The life he lived and the books he left may provide strong evidence for answering the question regarding the very possibility of the philosophic life today in the affirmative. But what are the most characteristic features of the philosophic life? Strauss, as can be learned from the present volume, studied both philosophy and poetry. The latter sometimes has the ability to voice something essential that searches deeper than some elaborate enunciations. We cannot here refrain from letting poetry speak about philosophy in this respect. It would not be presumptuous to suggest that a poem by Zbigniew Herbert, one of the most important Polish authors living in the age of the communist rule, beautifully depicts the ideal of philosophic life that had been held dear by Strauss:

Mr. Cogito
always defended himself
against the smoke of time

he valued concrete objects
standing quietly in space

he worshipped things that are permanent
almost immortal

dreams about the speech of cherubs
he left in the garden of dream

he chose
what depends
on earthly measures and judgment
so when the hour comes
he can consent without a murmur

to the trial of truth and falsehood
to the trial of fire and water

(*The Adventures of Mr. Cogito with Music*,
translated by John and Bogdana Carpenter)

After having listened to the poet let us turn to the works of the scholars whose articles form the content of this volume. The arrangement of the chapters is based on the following idea. The first part of the book may be referred to as "Leo Strauss Reconsidered" and consists of five chapters dwelling on the major themes in Strauss's thought. The second part, comprised of four chapters, may be labeled "Leo Strauss Encountered" as it attempts to explore Strauss's legacy against the backdrop of some of his major disputants. The third part may be described as "Leo Strauss Reread" as it consists of two chapters: the first one deals with Strauss's art of reading (or "learning by reading") in the context of postmodern challenge and the second one provides an example of an insightful art of reading. We believe that such an arrangement lends the book coherency that will allow the reader to grasp the thread leading from the essential question "Why Leo Strauss?" to the controversy over treatment of the text, the controversy which is nowadays considered crucial.

Heinrich Meier in the chapter entitled *Why Leo Strauss. Four Answers and One Consideration concerning the Uses and Disadvantages of the School for the Philosophical Life* claims that the question "Why Leo Strauss" can be answered separately from the recent Strauss boom in media. He unfolds his answer to the question posed at the very beginning into four answers. The first answer is that Strauss opened up a new historical and philosophical access to the history of philosophy by making us aware of the exoteric-esoteric way of writing and thereby

its significance in gaining the proper understanding of the history of philosophy. The second answer is that Strauss points to the fact that philosophy is a way of life and not merely a set of doctrines. The third answer is that Strauss places political philosophy at the center of philosophy. Because political philosophy confronts seriously the question what is right, it becomes the locus of philosophy's reflection on itself. Political philosophy is responsible for defense of philosophy and its rational justification; in political philosophy the whole of philosophy is at stake. The fourth answer is that Strauss made the theologico-political problem his main theme. The rational justification of philosophy presupposes its confrontation with its strongest antagonist: the challenge of revelation; and no more powerful objection to philosophy exists than objection based on the faith in an omnipotent God. Meier's conclusion is that the possibility to turn from the history of philosophy to the intention of the philosopher may allow us to come to the insight that "leaving the historical cave" is always possible.

Daniel Tanguay in the chapter entitled *Leo Strauss and the Contemporary Return to Political Philosophy* discusses Strauss's assessment that today political philosophy is in a state of decay or putrefaction. It seems that this state of things has changed in the last thirty years due to revival of political philosophy (in France called *Renouveau de la philosophie politique*). According to him this simplistic picture of revival must be qualified in a few respects. He poses the question: "Is Strauss's judgment invalidated by this renewal?" Strauss regarded political philosophy as an attempt to answer two closely connected questions: "What is the best regime?" and "What is the best life?" The knowledge of human nature is necessary in order to judge which political regime is the best regime, which is at the same time "conducive to human excellence." Strauss distinguished between the best regime (a combination of "way of life" and "form of government") which is noble and just, and many legitimate regimes which are only just. According to Strauss modern political thought has blurred the distinction between legitimate and best regime. Modern natural law focuses on the conditions of legitimacy of a regime and not on the quest for the best regime. Strauss asked the question of the best regime and against this backdrop we can see how his renewal of political philosophy differs from other similar attempts in recent times. Almost all contemporary political philosophers believe that there is no serious alternative to the democratic regime. Contemporary political philosophy is a theory of democracy. Tanguay claims that this situation may be considered a complete departure from the traditional political philosophy.

Nathan Tarcov begins his chapter entitled *Philosophy as the Right Way of Life in* Natural Right and History with a remark that one of the most salient themes in Strauss's thought is the conception of philosophy as a way of life. This conception contrasts with the contemporary approach to philosophy as merely a branch of research. Strauss states in his response to historicism that philosophy in its original (Socratic) sense is the awareness of the fundamental problems and the

fundamental alternatives regarding their solution. Modern philosophy is politicized because it wants to establish the best order while original philosophy was rather humanizing since it did not put itself in the service of such actualization. The difference between philosophers and intellectuals corresponds to the difference between philosophers and gentlemen and between philosophers and sophists or rhetoricians. Granted that philosophy has awareness of its limits, it can answer the Socratic question of how to live because it is a way of life devoted to the quest for knowledge or wisdom. This "Socratic answer" remains in a perennial conflict with "the anti-Socratic answer." Tarcov discusses the relation between philosophic questioning and the divine law and between the philosopher and popular opinion. The philosopher's ascent from the cave and his descent into the cave is discussed here in detail against the backdrop of the dependence of the philosophic life on the city. The chapter ends with asking a few compelling questions regarding the very possibility of choosing the philosophic way of life as one's own way of life.

David Janssens begins his chapter entitled *The Philosopher's Ancient Clothes. Leo Strauss on Philosophy and Poetry* with a remark that we can distinguish three quarrels in the work of Leo Strauss: 1) between Athens and Jerusalem, or reason and revelation; 2) between Ancients and Moderns; 3) between philosophy and poetry. He argues that the third quarrel deserves more attention than it has received up till now. His aim is to draw our attention to the importance of ancient poetry for Strauss's understanding of the art of writing of the classical philosophers. According to him Strauss took the third quarrel no less seriously than the others. He argues that Leo Strauss had become increasingly doubtful whether there is a quarrel between poetry and philosophy (as famously declared by Plato). Janssens's main thesis is that ancient philosophy is fundamentally indebted to ancient poetry. As an example may serve the well known fact that the word "nature" (*phusis*) appears in Homer's *Odyssey.* Strauss discovered that the famous Greek historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides or Xenophon were not interested in merely recording the events. Their true aim was protreptic: to help attentive readers to free themselves from the authoritative opinions and arrive at a genuine education (paideia). Janssens avers that Strauss's reflection reached a point where the distinction between poets, historians, and philosophers seems to dissolve. In order to gain the proper understanding of Plato we have to study the writings of the pre-Platonic poets and historians. When viewed from the perspective of the art of writing (Platonic "noble lies" and Hesiodic-Homeric "tales similar to the truth") the similarities between poets and philosophers seem to be striking. One of the most important similarities between the two can be seen in their ministerial and not autonomous character: they lead men to the understanding of the human soul.

Paweł Armada in the chapter entitled *Leo Strauss as Erzieher: The Defense of Philosophical Life or the Defense of Life Against Philosophy* claims that the ques-

tion that seems to underlie Strauss's oeuvre is the question of an inevitable conflict between politics and philosophy (and these two terms have to be understood as the two ways of life). This can be also depicted in classical terms as a problem of relation between "the cave," which means the political community, on the one hand, and the struggle to ascend from the cave, led by Socratic philosophers, on the other hand. We may thus say that the *conditio sine qua non* of philosophy is the cave itself. If so, the defense of the philosophic way of life should be primarily understood as the defense of a necessary ground for any possible philosophical enterprise or, to put it in other words, of the commonsensical perception of political things which has something to do with the faith in divine source of the law of a particular community. From a certain point of view, a Straussian depiction of what philosophy originally was, of Socrates' way of life, may be construed as embarrassingly idealistic. Armada presents Strauss's judgment of the "modern solution" as being *contra naturam*. The natural conditions are to be found only within closed societies, not a world-state but, Strauss admits, this natural order cannot be simply restored in the extremely unfavorable situation that we experience today. Armada concludes that Strauss's figure of Socratic philosopher as an educator is deliberately idealized in order to redeem the claims of politics or political life or maybe human life as such. He views the Straussian concern about politics as substantially preceding the concern about the philosophic life as ascribed to Nietzsche. In other words, living in the cave comes before living "under the sky." And even with the highest estimation for the philosophy as it may be, as prudent as detached or concerning about the eternal, there is still a need for the law given by a (serious and sensible) prophet-legislator.

Jürgen Gebhardt in the chapter entitled *Modern Challenges – Platonic Responses: Strauss, Arendt, Voegelin* discusses Leo Strauss in the company of such thinkers as Hannah Arendt, Eric Voegelin, and Michael Oakeshott. All of them reacted to the crisis of the European world. Gebhardt claims we can see that the theoretical understanding behind the works of the thinkers in question is that of Plato's image of the city. They focused on the critical understanding of the disorder of their times. He speaks in terms of "platonic responses" because all these thinkers created a paradigm of order based on their reflexive understanding of the human predicament or a conception of representative humanity in the sense of the reflexive paradigm of the platonic city. The debate on the so-called decline of political theory that began in the 1950s and allegedly ended in 1971 with Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* was an intellectual blunder partly due to plain ignorance, but also to the fact that many of the thinkers in question were German émigrés formed by the German philosophy and representing an orientation that might have been threatening to some basic premises of American political science. These thinkers differed significantly, but one can discern certain agreements. Strauss analyzed the crisis of modernity using the three-wave hypothesis and focusing on the Machiavellian modification of a pre-modern political phi-

losophy. Voegelin presented a description of a civilizational drama that ended up in the totalitarian execution of an inner-worldly eschatology emerging from sectarian Christianity (the thesis of the Gnostic character of modernity). Arendt, in turn, regarded the crisis as primarily political and having its roots in the demise of the Roman trinity of religion, tradition, and authority. The four did not work out blueprints for direct political action, but evoked the unseen measure that is indispensible as an ordering force in the life of citizens.

Arkadiusz Górnisiewicz in his chapter entitled *Karl Löwith and Leo Strauss on Modernity, Secularization, and Nihilism* explores Strauss's and Löwith's views of modernity with a particular emphasis put on the notions of "secularization" and "nihilism." He claims that at a first glance their stances on modernity seem to be quite similar: same dissatisfaction with the outcome of modern civilization, its soullessness, its conquest of nature, same rejection of the prevailing historicist understanding of man. Modernity for Strauss constitutes above all a break with the classical thinking. Strauss speaks in terms of the project of modernity: modernity is not a by-product of some objective processes or the development of Hegelian Spirit, but rather it was actualized by the means of some positive project. In turn, Löwith elaborates the problem of modernity not on the plane of political philosophy, but on the plane of philosophy of history. Löwith conceives modernity not as a radical break, but in terms of the persistence of the basic eschatological pattern after which the secularized modern philosophies of history are fashioned (the secularization thesis). He focuses on the demise of the cosmological reflection which brings forth existentialism and historicism. Both Strauss and Löwith claim that modernity ended up in a crisis which may be called nihilism. The recognition of the crisis of modernity led them both to reflect on the possibility of return. But the problem of return is ambiguous since the Western civilization consists of two main elements: the Bible and Greek philosophy, or in a more metaphorical language: Jerusalem and Athens. In turn, for Löwith the problem of return emerged not in the form of the conflict between Jerusalem and Athens, but above all in the form of two interpretations of nihilism given by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The chapter analyzes the grounds of their rejection of the homogenous and universal state.

Emmanuel Patard begins his chapter entitled *Remarks on the Strauss-Kojève Dialogue and Its Presuppositions* with brief remarks on the current grave state of the modern project of universal Enlightenment. Alexandre Kojève, the famous commentator of Hegel, still stood for the modern project, the aim of which he called "universal and homogeneous State," the End-State which is supposed to fulfill the fundamental aspirations of Man, to solve all contradictions and conflicts in human thought and action. Kojève challenged *On Tyranny*, Leo Strauss's defense and illustration of the classical view of the fundamental problems through a commentary on Xenophon's *Hiero*. Kojève's critical review was for Strauss a fitting opportunity to confront the philosophical quarrel between Ancients and Moderns, in a "Restatement" which appears to be the most extensive and the

deepest reply to the critiques which have been addressed to his achievement. In the famous concluding paragraph of his "Restatement," Strauss stated the conflicting presuppositions of his discussion with Kojève. Patard discusses the debate in a detailed way. Kojève equated Hegel's key statement "*Geist* ist Zeit" with the following one: "*Man is* Time," Time exists insofar there is History, i.e., human existence, driven by Desire (oriented toward future: what is absent, present insofar it is absent), Desire of Desire (desire as constituting man in his humanity, i.e., anthropogenic desire), "Man is Desire for Recognition," and eventually the "historical evolution which finally comes to the universal and homogeneous State." Patard discusses the problem of the last men with regard to the universal and homogenous state and the grounds of Strauss's objection to it. He also draws our attention to the final, well-known sentence from Strauss's concluding paragraph that clearly alludes to Heidegger's revival of the question of Being (*Seinsfrage*), and it implies that a common agreement between Strauss and Kojève against Heidegger is crucial in their debate.

Piotr Nowak in his chapter entitled *Carl Schmitt and his Critic* claims that Carl Schmitt, like Hobbes before, was considered to be an intellectual pariah for many years. According to him Hobbes and Schmitt certainly share a few concepts, first formulated by Hobbes and then filled with new meaning by Schmitt such as *bellum omnium contra omnes*, "protection in exchange for obedience," "man is a wolf to another man." The two authors shared the anthropological axiom – similar understanding of *human nature*, of its evil character. Nowak discusses a masterly critique of Schmitt by Leo Strauss. For Hobbes, the state of nature is a constant struggle against adversity, against physical and social power, the influence and wills of other people. In this sense, the state of nature is impossible. One cannot live in such conditions. According to Schmitt, however, the state of nature does not concern individuals but separate totalities, states which have deadly enemies (deadly – because a political conflict is always a struggle for life and death) as well as potential allies and neutral states. The state of nature defined in this way is not a fiction. However it may become a fiction when the world is completely depoliticized. Hobbes pictured the mechanics and the workings of the power apparatus of the modern state. According to Nowak it was Schmitt who penetrated the beast from the inside and who found the direct opposite of the Leviathan.

Till Kinzel in his chapter entitled *Postmodernism and the Art of Writing: The Importance of Leo Strauss for the 21st Century* speaks about Strauss within the context of postmodernism in order to highlight today's very strong prejudices to Strauss's understanding of philosophy. These obstacles are based on the extreme historicism or culturalism that is dominant in the current academic discourse and which denies any transcultural standards as well as the ability to overcome the limitations of time. The thought of Michel Foucault or Jacques Lacan claims something contrary to Strauss, namely that writers are not masters of their words

but rather the servants of some mysterious unconscious that speaks through them. Kinzel stresses the importance of Leo Strauss whose work presents a serious challenge to the reigning orthodoxies about how to read texts. Strauss rejected the current presupposition that the "humanities" always historicize and the dogma that denies the very possibility of philosophy in the original sense. Strauss's conception of philosophy aims to preserve an awareness of the necessity not to stop thinking, which is identical with asking questions. These questions in turn always imply the crucial questions "Why philosophy?" and "What is philosophy?" And these questions cannot be questions about anything, but about most important and weighty matters. Strauss takes up Plato's famous allegory and talks about the so-called second cave into which we have fallen. The second cave of which Strauss speaks in the 1930s constitutes our modern predicament which is an unnatural situation. It is necessary to use (and it is paradoxical) unnatural means to retrieve something of the natural horizon that constitutes the starting point for philosophy as originally understood. We can try to ascend from the cave by means of "lesendes Lernen" (learning by reading). So the task of philosophical education for the 21st century may thus well be to teach students the art of reading. Kinzel concludes emphatically: Reading is a form of action in behalf of philosophy: *Legere est agere.*

The last chapter entitled *Leo Strauss's* Gynaikologia, written by Laurence Lampert (who himself could not be present at the conference), gives a significant example of an art of reading deeply inspired by Strauss's concept of esoterism. Lampert refers to the two late books by Strauss that convey Xenophon's picture of Socrates. The method he uses is a kind of very careful exegesis whose aim consists in recovering the twofold meaning of the text; an exegesis that should be considered an invitation to study the text in order to confirm or refute the claims made by the commentator. Thus, from Lampert's point of view, a philosophic text is esoteric, which means that it "has hidden marvels" for the most selected audience. According to him, such an art of esoteric writing was practiced by the classic pupil of Socrates as well as by Strauss philosophically commenting on his works. Now, the title "gynaikologia" is given by Strauss and it covers four chapters containing Socrates' narration of his conversation with Ischomachos. These are: Marriage according to the gods and according to the law (Chapter VII); Order, I (Chapter VIII); Order, II (Chapter IX); Cosmetics (Chapter X). Lampert shows that Strauss's commentary deliberately reflects the structure of Xenophon's book. Not leaving the plane of exegesis he expresses the suggestion that "Xenophon's mature Socrates offered his teleotheology" (with this term, also coined by Strauss, meaning that "Socrates teaches a theology and a cosmology that maintain that gods manage a cosmos end-directed for human benefit") "as Plato's mature Socrates offered his doctrine of ideas;" they occur to be the teachings susceptible to "difficulties or logical refutation, but salutary or useful for young gentlemen and prospective philosophers." In Lampert's words, "while the

peculiarly Socratic philosophizing was taken up in various ways by Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle it remained a never ceasing consideration of nature and human nature sheltered behind a salutary teaching on nature and human nature that it knew to have difficulties." Then it seems that we are left with a fundamental question of the philosopher's ability and willingness to create a new political order to replace a dying world he still lives in, or some new values regarding gods and virtue to be pursued, by means of his salutary teaching on human nature.

* * *

First and foremost, the editors of this volume want to thank all the authors for their excellent contributions to the book.

We would also like to express our deep gratitude to the following: Bogdan Szlachta, Dean of the Department of International and Political Studies and Chair of Political Philosophy, Jagiellonian University, for his generous support of this publication (we keep also in mind his support of the conference and, generally, of our academic initiatives); Bruce Fingerhut, the director of St. Augustine's Press, for his being most sympathetic to our project and ready to cooperate on it; Marta Czerwonka from the Jagiellonian University Press, for her assistance; Lisa Fretschel, for her advice on language.

Our fruitful encounters with Professor Heinrich Meier in Munich – one of us traveled there in May, 2008, and next we both paid a visit to him in November that year – deserve special acknowledgment as they provided us with many insights and suggestions indispensable for the final outcome of the conference on Leo Strauss and this publication as well.

Paweł Armada, Arkadiusz Górnisiewicz
Krakow, April 2010